

MISSOURI **Computers for Schools** PROGRAM

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Missouri Computers for Schools Program is threefold:

- To distribute computers to schools at virtually no cost (the only expense is to coordinate computer pick-up and shipping);
- To provide a place where businesses, companies, and individuals can donate their used computers; and
- To train offenders, giving them marketable skills that can be used after their release.

History of the Program

The Computers for Schools Program was started at the Northeast Correctional Center (NECC) in November 1998. Through this program, computers donated by various companies and individuals are refurbished and distributed to schools throughout Missouri. The idea for the program was first brought to Missouri by the late Gov. Mel Carnahan, who saw it as a way for offenders to give back to society by learning a skill they could use once their term is complete.

Since the program began, more than 370 offenders have successfully completed the 180-hour class in microcomputer repair offered in cooperation with St. Charles Community College.



How Does the Program Work?

Funds are provided through a technical grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to purchase parts to upgrade computers that are then sent to the public schools in Missouri. DESE is responsible for selecting the schools that receive computers from the program.

Offender workers at NECC spend 38 hours per week working in the Vo-Tech Department refurbishing computers and making them ready for use.

Additional Information

All public schools in Missouri may apply to receive computers from the program. In order to be eligible, schools must have completed and submitted current Census of Technology information to DESE (<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/statefunded/census/index.htm>).

Currently, the computers available for distribution to schools are Pentium 133 or better, with 20 gig of hard drive and 32 to 64 RAM. They are upgraded with additional memory, have sound cards, CD ROM, network cards, and a Windows 95 operating system. A monitor, mouse, and keyboard are included.

The availability of refurbished computers through the program is dependent upon computer donations from corporations; funds for repair, refurbishment, and upgrade; and distribution quotas.

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